

Secretary of the State

SUSAN BYSIEWICZ



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE

NEW MACHINES: SMOOTH, SECURE TRANSITION

This September 11th for the first time, many voters across Connecticut cast their ballot using our state's new optical scan voting machines and vote by phone system. This event marks not the beginning but the culmination of a long and thorough process to ensure that all of Connecticut's voters are ready and able to vote in the 21st century.

Across the state, the transition from the 1930's era mechanical lever voting machines to optical scan machines and vote by phone system went smoothly. Of the 23 cities and towns holding primaries, few problems with the new voting technology were reported.

To educate voters we conducted over 140 public demonstrations performed by the Office of the Secretary of the State. In addition, we mailed more than 300,000 pocket guides to registered voters and placed 250,000 newspaper inserts in communities hosting primaries. Prior to the first ballot being cast, almost 3,000 Connecticut's Registrars of Voters, moderators and election officials participated in an intensive training program. They deserve a great deal of credit for their hard work and many hours devoted to ensuring that Connecticut's voters were able to cast secure and accurate ballots on primary day.

On Thursday September 13th, in accordance with state law requiring an audit of 10% of the polling places statewide, my office conducted a random and public drawing. Voter rights advocates from the League of Women Voters, Common Cause, Democracy Works and TrueVoteCT oversaw the selection of polling places. Audits will occur in Bridgeport, Cornwall, Cromwell, Derby, East Hartford, Hartford, and New Haven.

SECRETARY OF THE STATE'S OFFICE TO HOST LATINO VOTING SUMMIT

In conjunction with Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission Executive Director Fernando Betancourt, I am proud to announce the formation of the Latino Voting Summit. This first of its kind event is designed to generate momentum for a voter education and registration campaign in Connecticut's Latino community that will engage college students, elected and government officials, community-based organizations, churches, businesses, and professionals, prior to the 2008 elections.

The summit, will take place later this month at the Michael J. Adanti Student Center on the Southern Connecticut State University campus in New Haven. It will feature panel discussions on such topics as voter outreach and education strategies, motivating young voters, civics education, leadership development in the Latino community, and "get-out-the-vote" best practices from locally and nationally renowned leaders such as Dr. José E. Cruz, the State University of New York at Albany; Mr. Luis Cabán, Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance in Hartford; and keynote speaker Dr. Juan Andrade Jr., President and Executive Director of the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute.

For more information or to register please contact Val Ramos of my office at 860.509.6261.

Sincerely,

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September is Youth and Democracy Month

- Engage your students in a discussion about the importance of political participation and civic involvement.
- Challenge students to think about what they can do to engage young people in their community.

Supported by the CT Association of Boards of Education, CT State Department of Education, Office of Governor M. Jodi Rell, Office of the Secretary of the State. Enter the Challenge!

- Full application materials & guidelines are available at www.democracyworksct.org.
- Project entry forms must be received by October 1, 2007. Projects must be completed by March 15, 2008.
- Winners will be acknowledged at the 4th annual Youth & Democracy Forum to be held on May 3, 2008.

For more information, contact DemocracyWorks at (860) 727-1157 or CCLCE (860) 509-6184.